

CONCEPTUAL MANAGEMENT PLAN #5

GOVERNOR COBURN DRIVE SCENIC TURNOUT

LOCATION: Skowhegan (Town Map 5 Lot 120), south side of the section of Route 2 designated as the Governor Coburn Drive, bordering the Great Eddy of the Kennebec River, easterly of Coburn Park. Parcel #5 on SWT map.

SIZE: 5.00 acres; about 3800 feet of river shoreline along Route 2 gateway from the Great Eddy downstream to and including an old section of highway and wide gravel turnouts.

LAND COVER: Various – trees, shrubs, herbs, gravel shoulder, old Route 2 pavement, fill slopes, ledge.

FEATURES/PUBLIC VALUES:

1. About 3800 feet of frontage on Kennebec River.
2. Great potential for public use as part of Run of River project.
3. Key component of potential ADA compliant public Riverwalk trail.
4. A small parcel (Map 28 Lot 14) adjacent to Coburn Park upstream of this holding was donated to the Town in 1999.
5. Three rare plant communities on parcel plus two others and a rivershore outcrop just upstream on parcel given to Coburn Park, all as shown on IF&W Beginning with Habitat Primary Map 2, High Value Plant & Animal Habitats, Town of Skowhegan, as Features 3 through 7.
6. Scenic resource.
7. Informal parking/viewing/river access area.
8. Bird viewing opportunities.
9. Fishing from shore.
10. Roadside vending area for woods and agricultural products grown in Somerset County.
11. Within feeding area of bald eagles that nest downstream on SWT parcel.
12. Site visited by New England Wildflower Society botanists.
13. Entirely within Skowhegan Shoreland Zoning Resource Protection District.

FOCUS SPECIES:

1. Gerber's Sedge.
2. Clinton's Bulrush.
3. Long-leaved Bluet.
4. Long-beaked Sedge.
5. Threadfoot.
6. Indian Grass.

CONCERNS:

1. Old Route 2 and area along Kennebec River downstream being used for illegal disposal of solid waste.
2. Roadside area being used at times for unauthorized purposes (e.g., overnight parking of tractor trailers; unauthorized sale of goods and products).

3. Some MDOT proposed bridge/bypass alignments would negatively affect viewshed and possibly directly.
4. Protection of rare plants.
5. Property not signed to identify SWT as owner.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Protect focus species habitats from public use/access.
2. Contact MNAP regarding known focus species and any unknown rare species to develop more specific management recommendations.
3. Consult with New England Wildflower Society about appropriate management to protect the rare plants.
4. Determine if Riverwalk trail is feasible.
5. Avoid unacceptable impacts on rare plants if construct Riverwalk trail.
6. Do not allow significant disturbance of the ground without prior review and approval by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission or other accepted archeological (prehistoric/historic) authority.
7. Coordinate with Coburn Park regarding species present on its property and the need to protect them.
8. Advise Run of River Project of presence of these high value habitats and the need to protect them.
9. Collaborate with Run of River Project and Town of Skowhegan regarding river access and other recreational opportunities associated with this parcel.
10. Develop a written policy regarding public use of area and put up appropriate signs.
11. Develop old Route 2 area for such public uses as walking, bird watching, nature viewing, etc.
12. Upgrade and landscape the entire area (turnout area and old Route 2 section) to enhance scenic qualities and use by public.
13. Continue to work with Town regarding the illegal solid waste disposal problem and block off the old Route 2 area to vehicles while developing it for appropriate public uses.
14. Oppose any MDOT project that would impact this or the other associated SWT Kennebec River parcels directly or indirectly.
15. Request that MDOT lower posted speed limit to 45 mph and put up signs advising it is a scenic area with public entrances and exits.
16. Put up signs identifying SWT as owner.